been sanctioned by the Government. The total estimated cost of the work is Rs. 52·97 lakhs. The work is so designed as to be capable of serving a population of 135,000, the estimated population of Trivandrum in the year 1961 and an area of 11·22 square miles. The portion of the work that is being immediately taken up will cover only an area of 8 square miles and will cost Rs 46·60 lakhs. A sum of Rs. 9·08 lakhs was spent till the end of 1104. The expenditure has been incurred mostly on the purchase of the pipes required for the main gravitation line from Aruvikara to Vellayambalam and for the payment of compensation for lands acquired. The Water Works Engineer hopes to complete the work by the end of 1107 M. E.

Railway Extension.

21. The extension of the railway from Chackai to Tampanur in the heart of the town is estimated to cost Rs. 18·82 lakhs. The expenditure during 1104 was Rs. 5·85 lakhs and the total amount spent up to the end of that year Rs. 7·55 lakhs. Fair progress has been made in the construction of the Central Station and of the bridges and it is anticipated by the Railway Engineer that the work will be completed by the end of 1930 and that the first train may be expected to run before we meet again next year.

Electric Supply Schemes.

22. One of the most successful capital undertakings financed by the Government in recent years is the Trivandrum Electric Supply Scheme which has now been in operation for just over a year, the Power House having been opened informally on the evening of the 25th February 1929. In less than a fortnight thereafter, 541 street lights and 2 consumers were connected up, the supply of current being then confined to the first six hours of the night. From the middle of Edavam 1104, all-night supply was arranged; and from the beginning of 1105, the full twenty-four hours' supply commenced. By the end of Makaram 1105, there were 976 street lights, and 375 private consumers and 113 Government institutions supplied with electric power. The total length of line erected is 26 miles of overhead low tension mains and 4¼ miles of high tension underground feeders. There are three generating sets installed in the Power House. An additional generating set to meet the increasing demand from private consumers will be added to the existing plant soon. The total outlay on the scheme, including land compensation, was Rs. 4·41 lakhs till the end of Makaram 1105. In schemes of this nature, the working results for the first year will seldom be remunerative owing to the limited demand for power; but it may interest you to hear that the financial results of the first six months indicate a net return sufficient to cover depreciation and interest on the capital investment—the accounts being kept as in an ordinary commercial concern—and that the net profits would accrue to the general revenues. Other towns have not been slow to take up the idea. A license has been granted to a private agency in Kottayam

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at the instance of the Municipal Council which proposes to introduce electric lighting of the streets; and the Alleppey Council too is contemplating an electric supply scheme.

Neendakara Bridge.

23. As a first step in connecting Trivandrum with Cochin by a land route, the Quilon-Alleppey road was made and this was followed by the Alleppey-Arur road. The road lies across the bar at Neendakara and this has now to be crossed in a *junghar*. This is at all times slow work and in certain parts of the year attended with risk. The Government therefore decided to construct a bridge across the bar and the work which was started in August 1928 has been almost completed. It is expected that the bridge can be opened for traffic within the next month. With this, the road from Trivandrum to the Travancore frontier at Arur will be continuous but for a *junghar* crossing at Tottapally and Government propose to take up immediately the question of constructing a bridge there.

Forests.

24. There was a decrease of 1·2 square miles in the total area of the State reserved forests due mainly to the disafforestation, for purposes of assignment, of 1,155 acres from two reserves. More than one million and a quarter cubic feet of timber was extracted from the forests and sold for Rs. 14·58 lakhs, which was an increase of nearly Rs. 60,000 over the corresponding figure for the previous year. There was a slight fall in the net revenue of the department due mainly to the larger refunds of *kudivila*. The work of artificial regeneration of timber areas in the forests was also being carefully attended to and a fresh extent of 575·64 acres was leased out during the year under the *Taungya* system for planting teak. There has been some complaint that the free-pass rules as they are now worked cause hardship to the people. At the last budget session of the Legislative Council, it was suggested that the rules may be confined in their operation to areas which, on account of their proximity to Government forests, require to be specially watched for the conservation of Government timber. Accordingly the Government have appointed a mixed committee of officials and non-officials to demarcate the area that may, without danger to Government timber, be excluded from the operation of the free-pass rules.

Free-pass Rules.

Salt.

25. Arrangements were made from the beginning of 1104 with a view to popularise home salt and to enable the licensees of the factories working under the modified excise system to dispose of their share of the salt more easily. The licensees had till then to pay the duty before removing the salt from the factories for sale and this together with the cost of transport to the centres of sale meant the investment of large capital. Pre-payment of duty has now been dispensed with and licensees are permitted to remove the salt under bond to the Government depots at Trivandrum, Quilon and Alleppey on deposit of a com-

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